1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1888) 1991
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aspect of this female warrior, who is described as having been a little shrivelled up old woman.'

Among the second and peasant Kirds, as might be expected, very little attention is paid to education. The sedentary Kirds in Sulimaneeh and other centres, are not, however, wholly uneducated, as they have Mollahs, or Doctors of Divinity, of their own nation to expound the Moslem law and teach in the colleges. The wives and daughters of the latlered Kirds are also taught at least to read and write Persian, which is the literary language, for Kirdish literature is almost non-existent, notwithstanding an attempt made early in the century by some Mollahs to publish works in that language. The Kirdish tongue is not connected either with Persian or Turkish, and it contains as many dialects as there are tribes. Constant intercourse has, however, naturally resulted in the introduction into their idiom of a great number of Turkish, and especially of Persian, words. Poetic feeling often manifests itself among Kirdish women, who compose many graceful and touching songs, of which the theme is generally some social or tribal event.

The members of the Yezidi sect, who belong to eleven different tribes, and number between seven and eight thousand families, are said to entertain a strong prejudice against learning of any kind, and their ignorance is proverbial among the people by whom they are surrounded. With the exception perhaps of the higher grades of the priestly caste, the men are consequently totally without education, and their women are naturally in a similarly benighted condition.

[1] Dandamaev, *Die Armenier*, p. 130.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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CHAPTER IV.

STORIES WORDS—TEXTS FOLK-POINTS—FOLK-TALES.

[171] The tales and legends told by the Kirdis are of an extremely varied character. Among them are many charming sobriquets, some of which closely resemble Greek or Teutonic favourites, and delightful fables, or stories of animals, which seem to be but Oriental variants of those contained in the collections of Æsop, La Fontaine, and other fabulists. There are also stories of buried treasure, guarded by djins, or genii, touching love tales, and interminable legends describing tribal exploits and feuds, deeds of violence and reprisals. The latter class, though not strictly folk-tales in the accepted sense of the term, illustrate so much more graphically than any description could do the manners and sentiments of this wild and independent people, that I have ventured to include one or two of them in this chapter.

The first story is evidently a variant of the Tzantz Greek folk-tale of "Constantine and the Drakos,"[1] the opening incident of reaping the field of corn being precisely identical. The *Zoo* appears to be the Kirdish equivalent of the English "Ghost," Scandi-

[1] Somerville and Ross, Beside (2 G. vols.), Southward Characters, p. 191; and Blackie, A. p. 180.

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1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1888) 1891
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various "Troll," Indian "Rakshasa," and Greek Δράκων (Drakon);[1] a ferocious but simple-minded monster, who is usually outwitted by a clever mortal, the youngest of three brothers, or a widow's son.

The Three Brothers and the Dove.

539 There once lived in a certain place three brothers. The name of the youngest was Hannuk, that of the second Quoin, and that of the eldest Shelun. Now it happened that each had a sickle, and Hannuk said to his brothers, "Come along, we will leave this country and go to that of another tribe where we can work and get good wages."

So the three set off. They went to the uplands, and there they found a field of wheat. Said Hannuk to his brothers, "Come, let us set to work and cut this wheat, it has no doubt an owner who will pay us."

So the three went to the field, and they stooped down and began to cut the wheat. When they had been cutting for two days, Hannuk saw a cave; it was the cave of a Dove, who came out immediately, and shouted and said, "Who are you? Why do you cut my wheat? I will come and eat the heads of all three of you!"

Said Hannuk to his brothers, "Do not be frightened, there is a Dove; he is coming towards us, saying: 'Who are you, and why do you cut my wheat?' Do not speak either of you, but let me answer the Dove."

[1] Commonly translated by the late Mr. Goldner as "dragon." See vol. i. p. 222, note, and compare Dames, *Chanson. Pop. Baloutches*, No. 6.

[1] Leskien, *Forschungen über die Kurden*, p. 49.

1: Garrett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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eldest daughter of the Dev to his brother Rhalam, and 539
the second to his brother Qaim, and they all three
settled down and lived in peace ever after.'

The following pathetic little story recalls Grimm's 534
Brüderchen und Schwesterchen, and also the Bjarmic 170
Greek folk-tale of 'Αστραφτερό and τὸ Πουλάκι ("Starbright
and Birdie"), although in the Kirghiz version the
cannibalistic element is absent.

The Legend of the Owl (Gil'in).[1]

Once upon a time, there lived a man and his wife, 539
who had one son and one daughter. The wife died,
and the man soon after married another. After
two years had passed, and the second wife had a
daughter of her own, she began to hate the children
of the first wife.

The girl used to go out to feed the cattle. One
evening when she returned home she missed her
brother, and asked her stepmother where he was.

The woman replied, "Thy brother has gone to his
uncle's house."

The girl went to sleep, and in her dream she saw
that her brother had been killed and his body thrown
into a pit. In the morning she rose and said to her
father,

"Father, I dreamt last night that thy wife killed
my brother, and threw his body into a pit. I will
now go out with the cattle, and if I find my brother

[1] This story does not say what became of the Dev's wife, but most pro-
bably the Dev had killed her when he went home in a rage.
[2] Lewis, *Pleiadengruppe*, &c., p. 80.

1: Garnett D-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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him to the grave and buried him. He then returned to his house, cut off the head of his wife, and threw her into a pit.

The murdered boy's sister came home in the evening. When she saw neither her brother nor her step-mother, she asked, "Father, where is thy wife?"

"I know not," he replied, "but thy brother is dead."

When the maiden heard this she wept, and went away. Going down to the brook side, she bathed and prayed twice.

"Oh, Allah! Change me into an owl!"

And she was at once transformed into that sad bird. She flew up and away and was seen there no more.

The following story will recall at once the widespread nursery tale of "Puss in Boots. As in the Sicilian version of this story, mentioned by Mr Lang,[1] the Fox, from motives of gratitude, undertakes to make the Miller's fortune, but his endeavours are defeated by the cowardice of the pretended "Tzarinya Pasha."

How the Fox Wooed for the Miller the Daughter of the Pasha of Egypt.[2]

There once lived a Miller in a certain country, and his plenty of grist came to his mill. One evening he stopped the mill, went into his house, and slept. In the morning, on going again into the mill, he found the trough empty. So on the following night, instead of sleeping, he kept watch, and about midnight

[1] *Perrault's Tales. Introduction*, p. xxxix.
[2] Lane, *Fundgruben, &c.*, p. 69.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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The Padis said, "Go, bring him in." 539
So the Fox brought in the Miller's body, washed it, and buried it.

The following fable is precisely similar in its commencement to the familiar one of "The Fox and the Stork." The incident of the Mullah's fur pelisse is, however, quite an Oriental feature, and the final catastrophe is familiar to me as occurring in another Eastern story, the nationality of which I do not, unfortunately, remember. 531 ● 171

The Fox, the Eagle, and the Wolf.

Once upon a time a Fox and an Eagle lived on brotherly terms. One day the Fox said to the Eagle, "I will prepare a feast for you." 537

So the Eagle went to the house of the Fox, whom he found preparing the meal. When it was ready, the Fox placed the meat on a shallow dish, and invited the Eagle to fall to, saying, "Brother, eat!" But, peck at the dish as he would, the Eagle could not secure a morsel, while his host ate with ease.

Then said the Eagle to the Fox, "Come with me; get on my back, and I will take you to my home."

So the Fox got on the Eagle's back, and the Eagle rose high into the air. Presently he saw a Mullah kneeling on his fur-lined pelisse, at his prayers, and threw the Fox down upon him. The Mullah, terrified, ran off, leaving his pelisse, which the Fox promptly put on, and went his way.

[1] Lewis, *Forebeggers*, &c., p. 46.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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of his hole, he looks about for the Wolf, but, not seeing him, he ventures forth, and seizes the gourd, which he ties to his tail. By-and-by he goes to the fountain, and, his tail hanging over the side, the gourd falls into the water, and the Fox, in his efforts to pull it out again, tumbles in himself.

The transcriber of the next story, M. Jaba, suggests that "Shéi-Shâhîd" must have been an old Crusader, who knew of the existence of the treasure, and had come from Europe, disguised as a dervish, to secure it. I venture, however, to think it much more probable that he was the famous warrior-monk, Shéi-Shâhîb, one of the Moslem "Saints" who took part in the Ottoman Conquest, and of whom many extraordinary legends are related by the Turks.[1]

The Armenian and the Dervish.[2]

An Armenian named Shâir once lived in the town of Bagésh, which is situated in one of the *Aumâns* (districts) of Van. One day a wandering dervish was passing through the town, and received hospitality in the house of this Armenian. By the will of Allah, this dervish, whose name was Shéi-Shâhîd, fell sick, and remained a long time confined to his bed in the house of his host, who, with his wife and all the people of his household, took the greatest care of him. Every possible attention was paid to the dervish Shéi-Shâhîd.

[1] Some of these legends are to be found in the *Narrative of Sidee Mbarek*, published by the Oriental Translation Fund. Among other feats the saint destroyed a seven-headed monster, and delivered a king's daughter whom he was about to devour. She is said to have married [illegible] from infancy to seventy, hence even the sea on his shrine's [illegible] sea.

[2] *Recueil de Contes et Récits Kurdes*, p. 60.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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The affair got wind, and it was everywhere reported that Shîr of Bagirîv had found a treasure. The news finally reached the ears of the Pasha of Van, who sent for him and shut him up in the city prison, where he lay some time. He confessed the truth, and obtained his liberty only at the price of a quantity of gold, which he gave to the Pasha of Van. In short, Shîr had to scatter his gold in all directions.

Sensible folks will, perhaps, doubt the truth of this story. It is, however, firmly believed in those districts, and often related, and, what is more, the descendants of Shîr still live at Bagirîv in great prosperity. They have lands, mills, many a yoke of oxen and fine flocks, and they keep open house. One might say that it is a *tekkeh*,[1] for every one receives hospitality in this Armenian house; Moslems even are never repulsed, but welcomed with every mark of attention. From that time Shîr became well known among the Kürds, who made great friends with him, and brought him presents of sheep. It sometimes happens that they are at feud with the inhabitants of Bagirîv, and commit robberies and depredations in that town, but they always spare the house of Shîr, saying that it is as sacred as a *tekkeh*, and that not even an indecent glance must enter it.

The following curious story has been preserved by the late Mr. Rich,[2] who took it down literally from the lips of the narrator, a talismans of the Dehbokri of Dersîkranus, without, as he says, adding to or

[1] Dervish monastery, whose hospitality is generally exercised.
[2] Narrative, etc., vol. i. p. 190.

I: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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[117] altering it in any way. The incidents it describes are totally unlike those of Kirdish stories generally, and are probably derived from real occurrences, but belonging to a date far anterior to that assigned by the story-[118] teller, who, with the supreme disregard for accuracy manifested by persons of his calling in the East, would refer any remarkable story to the immediate ancestors of the favourite Kirdish hero, Suleiman Baba, if he could not refer them to the hero himself without being convicted of a too glaring anachronism. It may possibly be a survival of some story of chivalry belonging to the crumbling age of Saladin, whom the Kirds declare to have been a prince of their race.

A parallel to this legend may also be found in the [119] Greek folk-tale of Ἡ βασιλοπούλα καὶ οἱ τρεῖς στρατιῶτες "The Princess who went to the War."[1]

The Maiden Champion.

[120] There lived once in Dersiknous two brothers, Fekih Ahmed and Khidir, who had suffered much from the hostility of the Bulhanis, the most powerful people of Pishdar. Fekih Ahmed, who was of a bold and proud spirit, quitted his village in disgust, swearing never to return to it unless he should be in a position to avenge himself. He went to Constantinople, and entered the service of the Sultan.

It so happened that the Sultan was at that time at war with the Engleh (or Franks). In those days battles were generally decided by single combat. A champion had come forth from the Frankish host

[1] See Hahn, *Neugriechische Märchen*, p. 31; and Absalom, i. p. 104.

1: Garrett B-4, 5 (ca. 1868) 1891
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539 "Thou hast been a prisoner in the hands of the Moslems; thou hast been dishonoured; and darest thou show thyself before me?"

The bride, in her anguish, exclaimed in the Kirdish language, which had become familiar to her, "Oh, Fekih Ahmed, would that thou wert here!"

The person thus invoked immediately rushed forward, slew the bridegroom, and escaped with his wife to Constantinople, where the Sultan bestowed upon him an addition to his former grant. The couple then returned to Fidsheh, where they lived happily all their days. Before Fekih Ahmed died, he completely subjugated the districts of Fidsheh, Mergeh, and Mawett, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Dehe Silliman, the ancestor of the present princes of Silimaniah, who conquered the remaining districts of that part of Kirdistan now under their authority.

540 The Sultan Murad, who figures in the following Kirdish story, is most probably Murad IV., who reigned early in the seventeenth century, and resembled the famous Khalif Haroun al Rashid in his fondness for going about his capital in disguise. His adventure with the shepherd is almost identical with that related of James V. of Scotland—"The Gudeman of Ballengeich"—with the former Donaldson, who was subsequently known as "The King of the Moors."*

* See Sir W. Scott's Notes, Appendix to The Lady of the Lake, 8vo edition, 1833.

1: Chronett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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The Sultan replied that it had indeed been bestowed upon him by his father.

Shaking his head, Sher cried, "I knew that it could not be a dervish's property!" and a few minutes afterwards he asked permission to leave, in order to look after his sheep, which had been left without a keeper. The Sultan told an attendant to send some one to look after the sheep and call them, adding to the shepherd, "I will not let them depart." His Majesty ordered them to take him to the bath and give him a robe of state, and then only did Sher learn that Baba Murad was his Padishah. When again conducted into the presence, he fell at the Sultan's feet and implored his pardon for having been so wanting in respect for him. Murad overwhelmed Sher with benefits and honours, had his sheep sold, granted him many favours, and finally bestowed upon him by *berat*[1] the *fief* of several villages of Bayazid. At this day the chiefs of the tribe of Berekan are of the family of this man, and live in the village of Girkavia.[2]

The Kurds, like the Turks, have for their hero of [illegible] most of their comic and humorous stories, Nasr-ed-Din Hodja, the Imam junior of Timour the Tartar. Some of these stories are identical with those current among the Turks, but many are, doubtless, of much greater antiquity than the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century, the date assigned to this famous Oriental wit. The character of these anecdotes varies greatly. In one, for instance, the

[1] The Turkish equivalent of "royal letters-patent."
[2] Between Bayazid and Erivan.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1889) 1891
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§ 37. Hodja administers a severe rebuke to the evildoer; in another he enunciates a wise maxim for general observance; in many he is a mere buffoon; and in some his own honesty and integrity are more than questionable. Underlying the majority, however, is a vein of quiet sarcasm; and the *jeux de mots*, so much appreciated by Orientals, and to which the Turkish language especially is so well adapted, are very frequent, but impossible to reproduce in another language.

The Adventures of a Cooking Pot.

§ 38. One day the Hodja borrowed a cauldron (*kazán*) from his neighbour. Now this neighbour was a bad man, and the Hodja did not like him. After the cauldron had remained some days with him, the owner knocked at the Hodja's door and re-demanded his property. The Hodja placed a smaller pot in the cauldron, and handed it to him. When the owner observed this, he said to Nasr-ed-Din:

"This little pot is not mine."

The Hodja replied, "Thy cauldron has given birth to a young one; take them both, I do not want thy goods."

At this the owner of the cauldron rejoiced greatly, and exclaimed, "*Allah kerim*—Allah is great! with the Almighty nothing is impossible!" and so saying, he took the pots and went his way.

A month or two afterwards the Hodja again went to his neighbour to borrow a cauldron. The man brought out the biggest he possessed. "But that is too big," objected Nasr-ed-Din.

are unemployed, devoting their days to leisure. There are no organized adult sports of any sort in the town. Several of the young men who own rifles and shotguns do some hunting, and a great many love excursions into the countryside, such as a picnic at the waterfall of Beyhal behind the town. For everyday entertainment most men prefer the physical inactivity of the guest-room, the tea-shops, or the gardens. Tawli or backgammon and dama or checkers are played at great length, while shatranj, chess, has almost disappeared, although it is still remembered from Ottoman times. One thing universally regretted by the townspeople is the disappearance of the wandering story-tellers who, in consideration of a bounty, held forth in the tea-shops or the guest-rooms of the chief's house, but here they have replaced, for the town boasts no cinema, radios are few in number, and newspapers or books are never regularly received. Some of the townsmen have a considerable repertoire of stories, many concerning such comic figures as the Mamo or Mihe Shatir el-Hik, but it is to said that they cannot compare with the artistry displayed by the old professionals. A short story of the Mamo, as told in Rowanduz, will provide an example of the type of anecdote:

> One day the Mamo borrowed a small cooking vessel from his neighbor, and on the next, after filling the original pot, returned one much larger and of greater value. "The pot is different," remarked the neighbor cautiously, puzzled by the change. "The pot gave birth," returned the Mamo, "and I have returned its offspring." "Marvellous!" cried the neighbor, pleased with his gain, "I welcome the new son of the pot." Thereafter the Mamo borrowed each

day a larger pot from this neighbor, and each time returned one still larger. Finally, as had been his original intention, Aga Nuwas borrowed his neighbor's largest vessel, one of the greatest value because it was large enough to feed a company of soldiers. This he failed to return, keeping it with the intention of selling it. After several days, the neighbor called Aga Nuwas, and inquired greatly if the great vessel had given birth. "God rewards," sighed Aga Nuwas piously, "the pot is dead." "What!" shouted the enraged neighbor, "how can a pot die?" Aga Nuwas placed his arm gently on the other's arm and said, "Think carefully what the judge will say to this after you have accepted the offspring of so many pots. How can a pot give birth?"

The older women also tell the children folktales of various types, but it was not possible to record any of them in detail. The townsmen make little use of the mejlis or "club" of the officials and officers, nor are they interested in alcoholic beverages or gambling. A few, while on a journey in Baghdad, Erbil, or Mosul, may be attracted by the cabarets or the houses of prostitution, but these occasions are rare and there are no such institutions in the town or the Rowanduz district.

In masculine conversation, politics, both domestic and international, overshadow any other intellectual topic, and, as might be expected, are strongly coloured by Kurdish nationalism. It is unusual to find a group of Kurds discussing matters of philosophy, science, religion, or the like, and such things find a very small part in current interest. The Kurd, it might be said, is not particularly concerned whether the earth is round or flat, but will hold forth on contemporary affairs in the Middle East almost interminably. Kurdish nationalism, as noted at the outset,

this as a career simply starts to study with some sheikh who already has a position, and, when judged to have shown proficiency, will begin to be supported by the mosque. Others may study at the mosque-schools in Baghdad, Damascus, or other cities, or even seek the famous Mosque of al-Azhar in Cairo. In the first case, the student can ultimately succeed and replace his teacher, or the latter may find him a congregation of his own, for there is an exchange of information of this type between the religious leaders of a given locale. The training itself consists in reading the Quran and other devotional works, and committing the necessary prayers and formulas to memory. These tasks are by no means easy, and demand intellectual gifts above the average. The "best" sheikhs are those able to rehearse the entire Quran from memory, an exercise which requires almost a day. The Quran, it might be noted, is not recited in ordinary tones, but chanted, the voice rising and falling in various cadences. Because much of it is poetry, the tonal qualities of the words, the imagery they convey, and a dramatic and melodious delivery can elicit the strongest emotional responses in listeners.

Sheikhs are drawn almost exclusively from the ranks of the commoners, and so one in Ramadan would think of a case in which a number of the aristocracy had entrusted such a career. A given sheikh, as his age and reputation for sanctity increase, becomes known as a shaykh (arabic, "old man"), a title which is sometimes honorific, but does not

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whose patriotic poems in Kurdish are still recited with approval, was already seventy-five years old and thus formed an unbroken literary link with the days when the Baban principality was, in the words of another poet, "neither subject to the Persians, nor slave-driven by the House of Osman."

The first Kurdish political club was founded at Constantinople in 1908 by Amin Ali Bedr Khan and General Shérif Pasha of Sulaimani. There was a revival of literary activity during the brief honeymoon after the Young Turk revolution of 1908, when periodicals, anthologies and the like were published at Constantinople in both the northern dialect of Bohtan and the southern dialect of Sulaimani. The prominence in the south of the language of Sulaimani, which has since established itself as the standard vehicle of literary expression not only in Iraq but also on the Persian side of the frontier, is probably due in part to the patronage extended to letters by the later Baban princes, and in part to the foundation at Sulaimani by the Turks of a military school, cadets from which were on to the academy and staff-college at Constantinople, and so received a level of education denied to other Kurds;[1] these same officers naturally supplied the intellectual element indispensable for a nationalist movement.

A fresh fillip was given to Kurdish aspirations by the military defeat of Turkey in 1918, and by point 12 of President Woodrow Wilson's "programme of the world's peace" announced in January of that year, which stipulated that the non-Turkish nationalities of the Ottoman Empire should be "assured of an absolute unmolested opportunity of autonomous development." Shérif Pasha headed a Kurdish delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris and secured the insertion in the Treaty of Sèvres (10 August, 1920) of provision for the creation in the north-eastern vilayets of Turkey of an independent Kurdistan which the Kurds of Mosul vilayet would have the right to join.

IV.

When the armistice between the Allies and Turkey was signed at Mudros on 30 October, 1918, the British forces pursuing the defeated enemy up the Tigris were about 40 miles south of Mosul city; they were also in occupation of the line of little towns on the high road between Kifri and Khan Kharki. The Turkish troops were enjoined to be clear of the whole of the Mosul vilayet within a fortnight. British policy, dictated by military considerations but nevertheless in full accord with

[1] It was a fundamental rule of the Turkish army that only the official language of the administration or occupation of the area was that a large proportion of the officials in the new Kurdish districts had an even fundamental rule.